
Judiciary Committee

HB 3083

Title: An act relating to establishing standards for victim impact panels.

Brief Description: Establishing standards for victim impact panels.

Sponsors: Representatives Campbell and Williams.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishes a set of standards and policies victim impact panels must abide by in order to register with superior, district or municipal courts.

Hearing Date: 2/4/08

Staff: Sarah Silbovitz (786-7119) and Trudes Tango (786-7384).

Background:

A person convicted of driving under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug (DUI) is subject to monetary penalties, mandatory jail time and possibly a driver's license suspension. A person charged with a DUI may petition for a deferred prosecution on the grounds that the alcoholism or drug addiction caused the criminal violation. In addition to these penalties, a person convicted of a DUI, or granted a deferred prosecution on a DUI charge, may be ordered to attend a DUI victim impact panel. Numerous counties currently order persons convicted of a DUI to attend a victim impact panel.

Some counties also have victim impact panels for persons convicted of domestic violence.

Summary of Bill:

The primary goals of a victim impact panel are to help offenders understand the impact their crimes had on victims, their family and friends, and community; and to prevent an offender from offending again. To ensure that these goals are satisfied, each superior, district, or municipal court administration or its equivalent must maintain a registry of qualified victim impact panels. When a court requires a person to attend a victim impact panel, that panel must be listed in the

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

court's registry. To be qualified for the registry, the victim impact panel must meet a set of standards.

First, the victim impact panel must be offered by a nonprofit corporation, agency, entity, or other organization within the county that is not primarily associated with providing alcohol or drug abuse treatment or domestic violence treatment. If no such entity exists in a county, a victim impact panel may be offered by a corporation, agency, entity, or other organization associated primarily with alcohol or drug abuse treatment or domestic violence treatment, provided that the fees charged for the panel are donated to a victims' service program, minus the actual cost of facilitating the panel.

Second, the victim impact panel must charge a fee for all persons attending. Third, the victim impact panel must have a clearly stated mission. Fourth, the victim impact panel must maintain an attendance record for at least five years. Fifth, the victim impact panel must have a designated facilitator who is responsible for maintaining these standards and who is responsible for communicating with the courts the attendance or nonattendance of offenders. Sixth, the victim impact panel must not admit any person under the influence of drugs or alcohol and may institute additional admission requirements. Lastly, the victim impact panel must have policies and procedures to recruit, screen and train panelists.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.